

# SOCIAL ACTION



SEPTEMBER 1955

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# SOCIAL ACTION

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SEPTEMBER

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## *This Side and That*

### **Our Socialistic Pattern**

Recent declarations of Ministers at the Centre afforded a welcome relief to the private sector of industry and commerce. Close examination of the targets fixed by the Red and Pink draughtsmen of the Second Five-Year Plan brought into the open staggering miscalculations. According to the Minister of Transport, the targets were out by as much as sixty or seventy per cent. According to the Minister of Industry and Commerce, the forecast of investment open to the private corporate sector (other than coal, sugar and small-scale industries) will be of the order of Rs. 700 crores instead of the Rs. 200 crores our statisticians foresaw, a three to four hundred per cent mistake. (In Statistical Institutes, pupils are plucked for smaller blunders).

Moreover of the Rs. 4,300 crores, which is the expenditure target of the National Development Council, not less than one half will be shunted to the private sector, since the public concerns are not equipped to produce everything. According to ministerial forecasts, the second Five-Year Plan will demand

from private companies an additional output of not less than Rs. 3,000 crores. Such an additional output would put private companies at a greater pressure than during the second world war.

In course of time, however, snags may emerge; the most likely and the most dangerous spot is transport organisation. Transport facilities will be up to the mark after the end of the five years, but what about the first years? What of the bottlenecks that are likely to hamper the private concerns depending on transport accommodation? The public transport services will not suffice; hence the urgent need of developing private transport as well.

As far as one can foresee at present, the second Five-Year Plan will leave plenty of elbow-room for private initiative and talent, and the socialistic pattern people speak of so glibly holds little to frighten private capital. At the Avadi session, the Congress party did not really change its policy, and that is why its age-long capitalist supporters paid up their membership fee; socialism was in its patter, not in its pattern.

### ***A Shock to the Mahasabha***

In a speech which Mrs Rama Rau made at Hyderabad in the name of the Moral and Social Hygiene Advisory Committee, she gave a severe warning to some social organisations; she said pointedly: "Many of the rescue homes for women maintained by the Hindu Mahasabha and the Arya Samaj were anything but rescue homes". The girls who claimed the protection of these ashrams would be put on the marriage market and sold to the highest bidder.

This should come as a shock to the Hindu Mahasabha and the Arya Samaj, which are always so blatantly scrupulous about purity of means in conversion and rehabilitation work.

### **A Compliment**

Mrs Rama Rau went on : "The Committee found that rescue homes for fallen women maintained by Christian missionaries were doing excellent rescue and rehabilitation work." She heartily endorsed the missionary methods of rescue and rehabilitation and recommended them as "models for other social workers to imitate."

She boldly pleaded that the Government should establish rescue homes and staff them with fully paid workers trained in sociology. Unless this was done, she said, voluntary workers would not be able to tackle so vast a problem with any degree of success.

### **Caution**

That rescue homes run by volunteer organisations should receive plentiful help from the State is desirable, even if government grants imply complicated accounts and audits for which earnest social workers rarely show competence or inclination. That a degree in sociology would be a neat feather social workers could sport out of working hours, and that some training in psychology would be useful during working time is certain. But it is not likely that the secret of the success of Missionary institutions is due to a degree in sociology; the Committee might have made a deeper search for that secret, it might lie in that "inner voice" Gandhiji mentioned on occasion.

In the name of the people of India, honour and thanks to those missionary women who devote themselves to rescue work in obscure poverty ! Honour and thanks, even to those that were refused a government visa !

### **Humble Heroes**

The commendation of Mrs Rama Rau could be extended to all realistic workers who have set up creches, orphanages, homes, refuges, dispensaries, hospitals, etc., to all those who have run S. V. P. societies in practically each important parish, to all who in obscure villages, in black-areas, in slums have sought God at the feet of the poor. Their names are not mentioned in any Who's Who, their works are not listed in Social Exhibitions ; they survive, however, in the Book of Life.

Occasionally a name comes through the turmoil of political and mundane affairs. An instance is Adolf Kolping (1813-1864) who started a Home Guild for apprentices and journeymen a century ago. He went through the then usual misery of an apprentice shoemaker before he could enter the Munich University and join the priesthood. His association, now called the Kolping Home Association, numbers some 200,000 people grouped into 'families' and receiving professional training in 400 'homes', which are spread all over Europe and America among German-speaking people.

Kolping's method of rehabilitation was based on two principles : the altar and the home. Religion and life are one ; religion must inspire the whole life of

man ; the home is the primary cell of society and the model community. There can be no civic life without moral inspiration and professional qualification, without neighbourliness and brotherly feeling. These are basic factors in family life, and each community should be a family.

The Kolping type of organisation might be considered when organising our labour which is seasonal or migratory, and demands an organism which links up factory and village.

A. L.

"We sometimes ask ourselves why we should love one country instead of another. The question arises because we somehow consider ourselves unattached. We forget that we are born, grow up in a concrete framework, not by chance but because of God's will. We are marked in the innermost part of our spiritual being by belonging to our Country. If we are indifferent to our Country, if we refuse to serve it, we repudiate the debt we owe it. Our revolt is in fact implemented by the very things we have received from our Country. We can break our bonds, but we cannot remove the imprint of our Country upon us.

If we understand well what we owe our Country, we see that it is not a question of limitation, but rather one of order. Countries exist for what they should give to humanity and for mutual enrichment. To serve one's Country means to fulfil its end. If we defend its existence, its material interests, its reputation, its prestige, we do so because these are necessary or useful to our Country in fulfilling its mission."

(Yves de Montcheuil)

## *The United Nations after Ten Years*

In 1945 at San Francisco, in an atmosphere of radiant hope, the United Nations Organization was set up by the democratic alliance of the II World War. Its object was to settle international disputes by peaceful means and to eliminate the causes that lead to war by the promotion of international prosperity, and respect for Human Rights. Ten momentous years have passed since then, years of tension, of growing international bitterness, of several minor wars and clashes which all but set the entire world aflame once again ; years of cruel disillusionment, in a word. But the old hopes are stirring again, there is a better prospect of world peace today than any time after the "cold war" started. The tenth anniversary of the United Nations, coming just at this juncture, calls for a brief evaluation of its achievements, and its prospects as an instrument of world peace.

### ***Failures***

The failures of the UN which have led to disillusionment are patent to all. The most formidable was the outbreak of the "cold war" and the race for armaments. It seems incredible that after the close co-operation between the Allies of the Great War and their bitter experience of the horrors of global war, the nations of the world should so quickly and so cynically prepare for another and a more devastating war, that they should multiply instances of mutual provocation, of the suppression of liberties, of interference in the affairs of one another, of uninterrupted



mutual recrimination, all of which taken together could easily have led to a shooting war. Concurrently with this mutual alienation between the two great camps, came the piling up of armaments both conventional and the new weapons of atomic and nuclear warfare. There came the drawing up of regional pacts outside the aegis of the United Nations — NATO and SEATO on the one hand, the COMINFORM and the Warsaw Pact on the other, to be followed by the Bandoeng Conference, inevitable reaction of the Afro-Asian Powers to group themselves together in some way.

These are the salient examples of the inefficacy of the UN. But we must also note the outbreak of actual wars of a limited character, in Korea and in Indo-China, and the Arab-Israeli conflict. Moreover, the division of the greater part of the membership into hostile camps, has led to a deadlock over the question of the admission of other applicants into the Organization and the replacing of the Nationalist Chinese Government by the Communist Government. The admission or the barring of members to the UN has become an item in the "cold war", typical example of the helplessness to which the UN has been reduced by Great Power rivalries.

### **The Veto**

The instrument which has been the most potent factor in enabling the Powers to carry out this struggle within the UN has been the Veto — the right of the one or other of the Five Great Powers to veto a proposal in the Security Council even if it should secure

a big majority among other members. The outcry against the Veto has consequently been very loud and its suppression has been placed by some in the forefront in their scheme for the revision of the Charter.

But a little reflection will convince people that the suppression of the Veto will not only not be easy, but may not be so desirable. As long as the UN remains an Organization based on the free adhesion of nations, as long as its success depends upon their free cooperation, it should take all the steps necessary to retain the membership of the Great Powers on whose policies depends the maintenance of peace. An adverse vote by majority of the smaller powers on a point which affects its national honour, will oblige a Great Power to leave the UN. A few such resignations will break up the UN. That is precisely what happened to the League of Nations which was abandoned in turn by Japan, Italy, and Germany. These Powers were thereafter free to excogitate their nefarious policies without any check from international opinion. The Veto was introduced to avoid this danger. Though it has been exercised dozens of times, mainly by Russia, it has prevented the development of international crisis which might have broken up the UN and led to War. The UN has survived crisis greater than those which broke up the League of Nations. Its greatest achievement has been this survival ; it has been wounded, but it lives. And as we shall see, there is still vigour in its life.

That the excessive use of the Veto had to be curbed is however certain. That was the opinion of the Democratic Powers who, to be frank, are not in

favour of the suppression of the Veto which they themselves might conceivably have to use ; which they have used to prevent Communist China getting a seat in the UN. But the UN has found a way out of the evil. The Fifth General Assembly made a far-reaching constitutional amendment by which, differently from what was originally stipulated, the Assembly secured the right to discuss a matter already under the consideration of the Security Council, if the Council had reached a deadlock on it. It also secured the right to call even a special session of the Assembly, in case of danger to peace, and the Security Council was not able or not willing to act, and to take collective sanctions against the breaker of peace. This is the most important constitutional development which has taken place during the last ten years. It shows the steady rise in the position and influence of the General Assembly in contrast with the decline in the prestige of the Security Council, due to the deadlocks caused by the "cold war."

### **Vigorous Life**

Bearing in mind this notable development, let us also cast a glance at other signs of "vigorous life" to which allusion has been made. What are the positive achievements of the UN? Are we not in danger of forgetting them or underestimating their importance in the face of the frustrations brought about by the "cold war"? There are several instances of major intervention by the UN which have ensured peace and orderly settlement of disputes. The withdrawal of the Soviet forces from Ajerbaijan, and of the French forces from Syria and Lebanon ; the armistice in Palestine

and the settlement of the future of Jerusalem; the defence of Greece from subversion fomented by outside sources, and the decision on the return of Greek children in exile; the armistice in Kashmir; the role of the UN in the independence of Indonesia and the admission of that country into the UN; the decision on the Italian Colonies and the independence of Libya; the collective action against the aggressor in Korea, and when that question became embroiled, the part played by the UN in bringing about an agreed settlement there — these are some of the achievements which it behoves us today to recall with due appreciation.

All this refers to the political activity of the Security Council and the General Assembly, to questions of war and peace and the emancipation of colonial peoples. But we must not forget that the vast programme which the other organs of the UN have carried out for the assistance of backward and under-privileged people. The functional and special Committees of the Economic and Social Council (the ECOSOC), the important affiliated agencies like UNESCO, WHO, FAO, and ILO have done magnificent work in almost all the countries of the world, work which does not receive loud publicity in the Press. Among the special and the functional Committees of ECOSOC, UNICEF for assistance to Children, the Human Rights Commission and its work in drawing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and preparing the corresponding Covenants, and Technical Assistance to Backward Countries, must be specially noted. The services rendered by UNESCO and WHO and FAO to the ignorant, the sick, and the starving cannot be exag-

gerated. The economic and social programme of the UN is a fine example of international cooperation, and has done much to maintain harmony, and produce the "climate" of peace.

### ***Its Necessity***

The negative side has led many prominent people particularly in the United States to ask for the withdrawal of their country from the UN. But even in the darkest hours of the UN the responsible leaders of the world realised that with all its defects, it was still necessary, and was the only way in which peace could be safeguarded. These testimonies swelled into an impressive chorus at the Tenth Anniversary Meeting at San Francisco in June. The most eloquent of them came from President Eisenhower. Today, after the success of the "summit talks" at Geneva to which President Eisenhower himself has contributed a major share, there is a change of atmosphere which gives promise of an end to the "cold war". It is true that the change has been effected more by fear than by love. The dread of nuclear war compels the rulers of the world to turn resolutely to methods of negotiation for the settlement of disputes. Whatever the reason, if the "cold war" ends, the UN will regain at one bound the position of supreme importance which its sponsors had wished for it.

One dramatic announcement during the talks of the Big Four at Geneva promises to give to the UN some of the authority and power the lack of which has been the chief source of its weakness. President Eisenhower offered to allow International examination

of the armament centres of the U. S. A. by aerial reconnaissance and photography, provided the other Big Powers agreed to the same. The opposition to international supervision of armaments, based on jealous interpretation of national sovereignty, has been one of the greatest obstacles to disarmament and a major cause of the inefficacy of the UN. If this far-reaching proposal of President Eisenhower is accepted, the first great breach in this exaggerated idea of national sovereignty will have been made, and in the course of time it might lead to other agreements which would give effective executive power to the UN.

### ***Human Rights***

One particular sphere wherein the lack of such international executive power has been most regrettable is in regard to the enforcement of sanctions against those who violate the Human Rights Covenants. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the drawing of which was one of the achievements of the UN, needs to be completed by the acceptance by Government of Covenants which will have the force of treaties. In these Covenants, the general principles of the Declaration are translated into concrete enactments to safeguarding the personal and social rights of the citizens of every country. For over six years now the Human Rights Commission has been busy drawing up these Covenants, and the General Assemblies have been discussing their contents. But up to now not one Nation has come forward to sign them. Among the objections to such adhesion, one of the most serious has been the provision of tribunals to examine complaints regarding violation of the Covenants, and to carry out sanc-

tions against the defaulters. This has seemed to many, particularly in the United States, to be an interference with national sovereignty. The work of the Human Rights Commission has practically reached a deadlock because of this.

### Conclusion

We have seen that notwithstanding the many deficiencies of the UN its list of achievements during the past ten years is an impressive one. It begins its second decade of existence with renewed hope, and new chances of playing an effective role in International affairs. There is need and there is hope of crucial development along the three lines we have indicated: admission of members on recognized principles which will not allow the play of party rivalries; machinery for international supervision of disarmament; authority for the enforcement of Covenants to ensure the observance of Human Rights by member nations. If these developments take place, the UN will emerge during the coming decade with executive power corresponding to its moral influence, and will fulfil the glad hopes with which its makers launched it ten years ago.

J. D'Souza

## *Socio-Economic Integration*

Under the sway of economic liberalism, the wealthy of this earth launched into large scale industry and commerce; their avowed motive was private profit; they amassed wealth for themselves, indirectly enriched their country and incidentally fostered a rise in the living conditions of their fellow nationals. This betterment of living conditions was greatly increased and accelerated owing to agitation, and revolt among the people and to the interference of benevolent governments. In course of time long-sighted capitalists had the intuition and the courage to admit that an advance in working conditions would also favour larger production, consumption and profits. This view was given a theoretical basis by J. M. Keynes and grew in popularity among entrepreneurs and statesmen. A policy of social advance became a postulate in the economic world at the level of private, national and even international economy.

The question spontaneously arises: "Is it not all too beautiful to be true? Can it be taken for granted that every gift, every generous measure does pay? Is this trend of thought so well grounded that it can be taken as an axiom and applied in each and every case, in all countries and in all circumstances? Are there no conditions that must be established before social generosity can lead to economic progress?"

### **A New Order**

This policy is the reverse of the calculating capitalism of old, it is a revolution and as a revolution it



is liable to the same error and pitfall as economic liberalism itself, namely the error of believing that the relations between social and economic advances are automatic. Instead of the materialistic automatism (the economic commands the social), one should not fancy a higher automatism (the social commands the economic). In fact social betterment does not inevitably bring in economic advance, whatever be the mechanism in question, statolatry or technocracy. Unhappily or happily, there is no automatic process in economic life any more than in other spheres of human life. Human liberty is the ever present Pimpernel that plays tricks with forecasts of human behaviour, defeats the best measures and shatters prophecies. Human psychology can have unforeseen responses to challenges, and the native freedom of men and of groups can play havoc with the wisest plans. If social progress is to lead to economic advance, it supposes a special psychological climate.

Recent reports of French experts on a study mission to the U.S.A. bring out the salient elements of that climate. The most striking is the tone, the moral complex, honesty, respect for the given word, loyalty in contracts. Discussions are made with plain arguments and in outspoken language, but once an agreement is arrived at, it is being strictly observed. Add to this, the team spirit, the ambition of making a thorough job, the general and continual desire of mutual contacts, discussions, exchange of views between all responsible parties. In short a high regard for human dignity and equality, a deep belief that a solution is always possible, a brake on one's ambition induced by the very presence and personality of others.

something of the sporting spirit which tempers ambition and fosters team work. All this in a climate of youth and buoyancy which is on the look out for progress and adventure no less than for security.

Industrial relations are based on four points : information going up and down, to and fro in all directions ; emulation between individuals, teams and departments, stimulated by appropriate rewards ; promotion open to all and facilitated by special courses equipping candidates for higher jobs ; decentralisation which is distributed at all levels and spreads mutual confidence all over the concern. It is in such a climate that some large American concerns did a meritorious and successful effort at integrating labour and management.<sup>(1)</sup>

### **Factors in the Factory**

The American case illustrates the basic condition for social progress to promote economic progress. Even with the best possible relations between labour and capital, workmen and managers, advance in wages and labour conditions can stimulate the economy only if the economy is sufficiently elastic to absorb the increase

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(1) The very same observers, like E. Rideau in *Etudes*, July-August 1954, deplore the shortcomings of this integration. They regret that the movement suffers from a little-diluted materialism, collective passion for profit, imperialist tendencies ; on the national scale production is unharmonised and expenditure wasteful. They even query the impact of such trends on future labour humanism. Moreover they note that American economy has been forced to tolerate an increasing interference on the part of the government, particularly in agriculture.

in costs, whether revenues on capital diminish or whether the workmen's productivity increases. Capital must be able to wait, or technical knowledge must be available to compensate for cost increases. It was on such a background that Henry Ford could go in for high salaries with a view not only to improve the lot of his workmen but to improve their efficiency. As he wrote, "the workman himself makes high wages possible. A high standard of work makes for high wages". Mutual goodwill between employers and employees, as well as technical possibilities, are necessary if social measures are to assist economic proficiency.

Technical devices can somewhat easily be copied or borrowed from other countries; more delicate and difficult is the problem of the human complex. Quite possibly psycho-technique can be applied in a group, a region, country or community in which the social problem is not a problem of *classes*. When economic life is viewed as a struggle between classes, psycho-technique will not have a smooth run. It is not enough to tell the class of wage-earners all about the mechanism of the factory, the bank or the concern; what they want to understand and are slow to understand is not the technical mystery but the capitalist mystery. They are deeply diffident, they are suspicious and critical of any and every measure and proposal suggested by the management, even if beneficial to the workmen. They are still more suspicious and diffident when worked upon by political parties or by trade-unions affiliated to political parties, parties which are naturally jealous of their power. It is hard to get labour, particularly illiterate labour, to understand the

technique of a business concern, its economic and scientific organisation. It is much harder still to have them understand the working of the employer's mind, to get them to admit that there are employers that are not averse but even inclined to favour the improvement of the labouring classes. In order to develop this understanding, it may prove necessary to alter the structure of the enterprise so as to foster good relations between all. The labourers should be made to feel that they are real associates, that they are part and parcel of the undertaking, that they have a share in the business other than the mere selling of their physical energy at so much an hour. Factory councils, industrial committees, mixed organisations, etc., a new setting up should be created before measures suggested by psycho-technique can come in and improve efficiency. Then only can social betterment lead to economic betterment.

Another point of psychological importance calls for emphasis. With a suspicious labouring class, this productivity of social progress should not be put forward, not mentioned; it should not even be nursed in the mind of the employer, for if it be suspected in any way, the whole policy will be criticised and possibly resisted as a piece of hypocrisy. Social measures pay if they are leavened up with the sole idea of service. More concretely, there should be at the start the courage to take a risk, a full sincerity, a decision that will not be reversed. The employer must take it as a basic principle that even if the hopes held out by reformers do not mature, that if his social efforts do benefit others only, that even if he were to

cut down or retard his profits, he would not go back on his policy and alter the measures he has taken, that with him it is purely an effort at social justice. In other words, the decision must be a matter of heart-conversion.

### Service

Another idea the producer or trader must imbibe is the view that his business is a public service, caution being had that increase in returns be not expected to follow a service-preoccupation automatically. To serve the public means first of all to respect the public, to study the public's real and graduated needs, and to accommodate them; it means shunning mendacious advertisements and thoughtless consumption-credits; it means avoiding the creation of artificial needs and demands. Could we say that this phenomenon is unknown? Here is a vital point for present-day business. Our economists stress the problem of the equilibrium between national income and national expenditure. It is quite sound. But an economist is also a human being, and so are his fellow-nationals. Beyond and above the equilibrium between savings and investments, there is the more fundamental equilibrium between real needs and technical inventions. In all logic, in spite of the table of contents of our economic textbooks, demand should take the lead, trade should transmit, production and technique should execute. As a matter of practice this order is reversed quite often enough; but is it not wrong to foster and sanction such a reversal? Without challenging the often healthy stimulant, production has had on consumption, can we justify the still more frequent misuse of publi-

city to force the sale of haphazard produced articles and gadgets on a naive public ? Is it not an error to foist an invention just because it has been made ? Why make mankind the play of hazard in discovery and inventions, (which by the way is an error of technocracy) ?

If we take the rational view and want to create an economy that will serve man, we must be consistent ; we should patiently, methodically analyse the real needs of men and of countries, establish a list of their priorities, and search for means to satisfy them. Too long has research work been limited to machines and gadgets that would bring in profits ; too little has been the attention paid to basic needs like food, clothing and shelter (and that is why housing is a crying problem all over the world).

Social progress in its broadest sense can yield long-term profits on condition that it does know and respect the psychology, exigencies and finality, in short, the normative data of the human person. Economic advance through social progress is not a policy of ease, but of high endeavour.

### **Cautions**

A like rule holds good at the plane of the national or international community. Social equilibrium, expressed as harmonious full employment, is a precondition of a lasting equilibrium of national economy, and consequently of public finances. Combating hoarding, increasing general consumption, fiscal measures for a better distribution of incomes, all such measures foster economic returns in the long run, but in no automatic manner. Three factors should temper opti-

mism in that field : first, heavy taxation should not hamper creative initiative (here one might compare data between England and West Germany after the war) ; secondly, incomes which are sought after should not be frightened into hiding under the plea of unjustified self-investments ; thirdly exaggerated consumption should not restrict investments.

Over-consumption of luxury goods may arrest development. Measures of social security also run the risk of absorbing savings in sterile investments or in futile production (to invest in hospital-building and dispensary-equipping without suppressing slum areas or developping food-production looks like remedying effects without suppressing the causes). Nor should there be a blind faith in public expenditure as a compensation for short-falls in private expenses. The multiplying of incomes through expenditure varies with the sectors, the national economy and the circumstances of place and time and with the popular mood. Economics depend on psychology. Before adopting a policy of deficit financing, must not ministers foresee the possible and probable psychological reactions, real though unjustified, on credit, currency, exchange, that might shatter all hopes ?

One should not either talk glibly about full employment, since this very notion must be brought into focus ; full employment, at what wage level ? for what duration ? at what rhythm of production ? (Note that West Germany and even Italy have shown progress in spite of a certain degree of lasting unemployment and a high rate of interest). The road should be surveyed before launching a new motor ; a delicate motor does not negotiate all potholes and ditches.

On the international plane the free-gift policy is not certain to prove fruitful. It is a splendid idea ; the trouble is to embody splendid ideas into the realities of our sorry world. How will the assisted nation react to the gift if there be any strings attached, or even if there be a mere suspicion that there are strings attached ? Is not the suspicion to grow deep when the policy does not appear consistent ? For instance, nobody should blame American generosity in itself ; what troubles a few is that when the right hand gives the left remains closed, it is that when aid is given magnanimously, a policy of high tariffs and protectionism is being kept up. The International Monetary Fund in its report of 1952 was somewhat strong in condemning such inconsistency. The old free-trade did not contemplate a like discrimination. Those reserves in appreciation do not take anything away from the welcome the novel international generosity should receive even from the proudest of the assisted nations.

### **Priority**

By way of summarising what has been noted about the recent trends in economic policy, let us retain the view that provided human norms are maintained, social progress is productive, that even a loan without interest can be beneficial to the lender himself, that an act of impoverishment can enrich the giver. What is surprising is that people are surprised at such consequences in human relations. Formerly man used to separate economics from ethics ; the new trends show he was mistaken ; between both there can be a *mariage de raison*.

We are rising above the standard of the *homo economicus*. Selfish economy is short-sighted and



narrow-minded. It loses sight of the time factor and of human psychology. The pillage of the New World in the 16th century, the capitalistic exploitation of the 18th and 19th centuries, etc. provoked political and social reactions that went against the exploiters, so much so that Karl Marx was right in noting that the bourgeoisie was carrying its own undertakers. How many strikes, how many wars, how many ruins would have been avoided if the leading classes had taken timely measures of social justice and equity? An anti-social economy is always far from secure. How could it be otherwise when the whole of human life is a continual mutual exchange? Is not the very institution of credit a clear proof of this law? Is it not a trust in others, a temporary impoverishment which primitive people do not know? And are not measures of social betterment a kind of enlarged credit, credit to one's personnel, to the nation, to the other nations?

We should not, however, rest satisfied with this type of ethics, that honesty or generosity is the best paying policy. That would be second class ethics. Above it, there is the realm of justice, equity, charity. Social progress should be sought for itself; this is a categorical imperative. Woe to those who seek profit only and cannot sacrifice anything to a sense of justice and equity!

Our purpose, however, was not to stress spiritual duties and values; but it was felt necessary to note that an economy based on individualist selfishness is bound to cause division, strife and ruin. An act of justice may be hard for one individual, but the sum total of all acts of justice keeps a community alive

and prosperous. More metaphysically, it is only what is good that is productive of a durable common good. What is good is what builds up, conciliates and harmonizes. It is along such lines that one may hope to tread the path where justice meets prosperity. We should not forget it when discussing Community Projects, Bhoodan Yagna, or international cooperation.

A.ALLEMAND

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## *Social Legislation*

### A. THE CITIZENSHIP BILL

During the budget session of Parliament the Home Minister introduced a Bill to provide for the acquisition and termination of Indian citizenship, to be called the Citizenship Act, 1955. It will be taken up in the current session and is likely to have an easy passage as most of its clauses are of an uncontroversial nature.

#### ***The Reasons for the New Law***

"Articles 5 to 9 of the Constitution determine who are Indian citizens at the commencement of the Constitution and art. 10 provides for their continuance as such citizens subject to the provisions of any law that may be made by Parliament. The Constitution does not, however, make any provision with respect to the acquisition of citizenship after the commencement, or the termination of citizenship, or other matters re-

lating to citizenship. Under art. 11, the Constitution expressly saves the power of Parliament to make a law to provide for such matters. It is obviously necessary to make such a law to supplement the provisions of the Constitution and this Bill is supposed to achieve this object.

"The Bill also formally seeks to recognise Commonwealth citizenship and permit the Central Government to extend on a reciprocal basis such rights of an Indian citizen as may be agreed upon to the citizens of other Commonwealth countries and the Republic of Ireland."

### **Modes of Acquisition of Citizenship**

These are five in number, viz., :

1. *By Birth.* Every person born in India on or after the 26th January, 1950, is a citizen of India. Children born to persons enjoying diplomatic immunity and to enemy aliens do not acquire Indian citizenship.

2. *By Descent.* A person born outside India on or after 26th January, 1950 is a citizen of India if his father is a citizen of India.

3. *By Registration.* Any person, subject to the provisions of this Act and any other restrictions which the Government may prescribe, who is not already a citizen and who belongs to any of the following categories may apply to be registered as a citizen of India :

(a) a person of Indian origin\*, ordinarily resident in India and who has been so resident for one year

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\* A person is deemed to be of Indian origin if he, or either of his parents, or any of his grand-parents, were born in undivided India.

immediately before making the application. This provision is intended to help displaced persons to acquire citizenship.

- (b) persons of Indian origin who are resident outside undivided India ;
- (c) women who are or were married to Indian citizens ;
- (d) minor children of Indian citizens ; and
- (e) persons who are citizens of countries mentioned in the first schedule to the Bill\*\* ; of full age and capacity, either ordinarily resident in India or who have been so resident for one year immediately before making the application for registration.

It is not clear whether the residence of twelve months should be continuous or not.

4. *By Naturalisation.* Any person who is a subject or citizen of a non-commonwealth country, where citizens of India are not prevented from acquiring citizenship by law or practice, who is of full age and capacity, who knows adequately one of the languages mentioned in the VIII Schedule to the Constitution,\*\*\* has been in residence in India throughout the period of twelve months immediately preceding the application, and who, moreover, has during the seven years preceding the said period of twelve months resided in India for periods amounting in aggregate to not less

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\*\* United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, Ceylon, New Zealand, Pakistan, Southern Rhodesia, Union of South Africa, The Republic of Ireland. U. K. includes the Colonies.

\*\*\* Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Kashmiri, Oriya, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu and Urdu.

than four years, may apply for Indian citizenship by naturalisation.

All those who acquire citizenship through registration or naturalisation are required to take an oath of allegiance in the prescribed form. "The prescribed authority or the Central Government may, in its discretion grant or refuse an application for citizenship through registration or naturalisation and shall not be required to assign any reason for such grant or refusal. The decision shall be final and shall not be called in question in any court." S. 14.

5. *By Incorporation of Territory.* If any territory becomes part of India, the Central Government may, by order, notified in the Official Gazette, specify the persons who shall be citizens of India by reason of their connection with that territory; and those persons shall be citizens as from that date.

### **Termination of Citizenship**

Citizenship may be terminated voluntarily, or by law or by deprivation.

- (a) *Voluntarily*: A person who is of full age and capacity, who is also a citizen of another country may renounce his Indian citizenship.
- (b) *By Law*: Any citizen of India who by naturalisation, registration or any other manner voluntarily acquires citizenship of another country automatically loses his Indian citizenship.
- (c) *By Deprivation*: The Central Government, may by order, deprive any citizen of India who has acquired citizenship by registration, naturalisa-

tion or through the provisions of clause (c) of art. 5 of the Constitution of India, if it is satisfied that

- (i) the registration or naturalisation was obtained by means of fraud, false representation or the concealment of any material fact ; or
- (ii) that citizen has shown by act or speech to be disloyal or disaffected towards the Government established by law in India ; or
- (iii) that citizen has, during any war in which India was engaged, unlawfully traded or communicated with an enemy or been engaged in, or associated with, any business that was to his knowledge carried on in such manner as to assist an enemy in that war ; or
- (iv) that citizen has, within five years after registration or naturalisation, has been sentenced in any country to imprisonment for a term of not less than twelve months ; or
- (v) that citizen has been ordinarily resident out of India for a continuous period of seven years.

Before making the order the Government is required to give the person concerned the reasons for the order. The person may, if he so desires, ask that his case be referred to a committee. The Committee will consist of three persons all appointed by the Government. The Bill does not say whether the person has a right of appeal to a court of law in case of an adverse sentence. We think he has the right.

**Commonwealth Citizens**

Commonwealth citizens belonging to countries mentioned above have the status of commonwealth citizens in India. The Central Government may, by order notified in the Official Gazette, make provisions on a basis of reciprocity for the conferment of all or any of the rights of a citizen of India on the citizen of any country mentioned in the First Schedule.

The Bill makes provision for the making of rules by the Government for the purpose of this Act.

All laws relating to naturalisation which are in force in any part of India at the time will become defunct on this Bill becoming law.

*F. C. Rodrigues*

**B. THE NEW HINDU MARRIAGE LAW**

Earlier this year the Indian Parliament, after several years of acrimonious discussion, enacted a law which is bound to have far reaching effects on the social structure of Hindu society. The Hindu Marriage Act, a piece of legislation to amend and codify the law relating to marriage among Hindus, received the assent of the President and was published in the official Gazette on 18th May, 1955. The law extends to the whole of India except the State of Jammu and Kashmir.

The new Act applies to Hindus and by Hindu is meant all persons who are Hindus, Buddhists, Jains or Sikhs by religion, as also those who follow Hinduism in any of its forms or developments such as the Brahmo,

Arya or Prathana Samaj. A child, legitimate or illegitimate, one or both of whose parents are Hindus by religion, is deemed to be a Hindu. In the case where only one parent is a Hindu the child should have been, moreover, brought up in the tribe, community, group or family to which the parent belonged or belongs.

Converts and re-converts to Hinduism are classed among Hindus.

In the older laws they used to say, "a person professing the Hindu or Christian religion" but in this new law the expression used is "a Hindu, or Christian by religion". Is this change of expression deliberate? What is the criterion on which one is to determine the religion of a man? Is it a condition laid down by the religion itself for membership or is it mere external profession? In several High Court rulings it has been laid down that external practice is sufficient to determine a man's religion. The Code of Canon Law states that baptism is essential for one to become a member of the Church. Catholic doctrine has it that once a person has been validly baptised he remains forever a Christian whether he lives up to his obligations or not. Hence a Christian who would abandon the practice of his religion and embrace, for instance, Hinduism, is not a Hindu by religion but a plain apostate from the Christian religion still subject to its laws and regulations. The same is to be said about a child who has been baptised in the Church but has been brought up as a Hindu or Muslim. The Hindu Marriage Act does not seem to admit this contention. While a Hindu is a Hindu by birth a Christian is a Christian not by birth but by baptism.



The new law does not apply to persons who are Muslims, Christians, Parsis or Jews by religion. Scheduled Tribes within the meaning of clause (25) of article 366 of the Constitution are exempted from the provisions of the law unless otherwise directed by Government.

### **Impediments**

Seven conditions or impediments have been laid down. Of these only three make a marriage null and void *ab initio*, the others are only for the legality of the contract. The diriment impediments are previous marriage bond, relationship by blood or adoption and the *sapienda* relationship. As for relationship in the direct line it extends to all ascendants, in the collateral line to the second degree.

The other conditions laid down are : age (the man should have completed his eighteenth year and the woman her fifteenth), soundness of mind, and consent of a guardian for marriage where the bride is below eighteen.

The most revolutionary provision here is the condition regarding previous bond. According to Hindu teaching a Hindu male may have more than one wife living but a Hindu wife may not have more than one husband. Now Hindu marriage, following the western tradition, which is essentially Christian, is made monogamous. The wife is no more just a means for begetting sons but an equal and only partner in the sacred matrimonial contract.

The Act permits the retention of customs and usages proper to the parties in a marriage concerning

prohibited degrees of relationship. Thus those communities among whom custom permits marriages between an uncle and niece, or between first cousins may still continue to do so.

### ***The Form of Marriage***

A Hindu couple may adopt any rite or ceremony customary among them to contract a marriage. In the case where the rite called *satapadi* (seven steps) is adopted marriage becomes complete on taking the seventh step.

The law makes no provision for a civil marriage for two Hindus. If they wish to contract such a marriage they may do so under the provisions of the Special Marriage Act, 1954, which, however, varies in many details. A Hindu who desires to contract a mixed marriage with a Christian or Muslim must follow the personal law of the other party.

A Hindu marriage may be registered under this Act. The Government, however, has power to make registration compulsory.

### ***Restitution of Conjugal Rights and Judicial Separation***

Provision is made for obtaining a decree for the restitution of conjugal rights when husband or wife has deserted the other party without cause. A judicial separation may be granted by a court on an application made by either party to a marriage on the ground that the other party has deserted the petitioner, or has treated the petitioner with cruelty, or is suffering from a virulent form of leprosy or venereal disease, or has been of unsound mind, or finally has committed adultery.

**Dissolution of the Matrimonial Bond**

A Hindu marriage may be dissolved either by a decree of nullity, or of annulment, or of divorce granted by a competent court of law on the presentation of a petition by either party to the marriage.

- (a) *Nullity.* A marriage may be declared null and void *ab initio* if it was contracted in spite of one or more of the three diriment impediments mentioned above.
- (b) *Annulment.* A court may decree the annulment of a marriage on the ground that the respondent was impotent at the time of the marriage and is so at the time of the presentation of the petition, or that the respondent was an idiot or lunatic, or that the consent of the petitioner or of the guardian to a marriage was obtained by force or fraud or finally that the respondent was, at the time of the marriage, pregnant by some person other than the petitioner.
- (c) *Divorce.* "Any marriage solemnized before or after the commencement of this Act, may on a petition presented by either husband or wife be dissolved by a decree of divorce on the ground that the other party .
  - (i) is living in adultery ; or
  - (ii) has ceased to be a Hindu by conversion to another religion ; or
  - (iii) has been incurably of unsound mind for a continuous period of not less than three years immediately preceding the presentation of the petition ; or

- (iv) has, for a period of not less than three years immediately preceding the presentation of the petition, been suffering from a virulent and incurable form of leprosy, or from venereal disease in a communicable form; or
- (v) has renounced the world by entering any religious order; or
- (vi) has not been heard of as being alive for a period of seven years or more by those persons who would naturally have heard of it, had that party been alive; or
- (vii) has not resumed cohabitation for a space of two years or upwards after passing of a decree for judicial separation against that party; or
- (viii) has failed to comply with a decree for restitution of conjugal rights for a period of two years or upwards after the passing of the decree.

A wife may also present a petition for the dissolution of her marriage by a decree of divorce on the ground —

- (i) in the case of a marriage solemnized before the commencement of this Act, that the husband had married again before such commencement or that any other wife of the husband married before such commencement was alive at the time of the solemnization of the marriage of the petitioner, provided that in either case the other wife is

alive at the time of the presentation of the petition; or

- (ii) that the husband has, since the solemnization of the marriage been guilty of rape, sodomy or bestiality." (S. 13.)

This section is revolutionary in character so far as Hindu society is concerned. According to orthodox Hindu doctrine divorce is not permitted to a Hindu. Marriage is a *samskara*, a religious duty incumbent on all. A *samskara* is not a sacrament in the Christian sense of the word though it is so translated commonly these days even by those who ought to know better. Once a marriage has been gone through it is supposed to last for ever and no one has the power to dissolve it. Our present Act introduces by law divorce for the first time into Hindu society. So far a Hindu couple could get a divorce through the provisions of the Special Marriage Act only; now things are made easier. It is worthy of note that divorce by mutual consent, which has been provided for under the Special Marriage Act, 1954, has found no place in this Act.

Considering what havoc the institution of divorce has wrought in some of the countries of the world which pride themselves on being progressive, one may be pardoned for questioning the wisdom of our legislators. It is true that the threat of divorce may help in keeping the erring spouse on the right path. But could we not find other means, in keeping with the norms of natural law, to achieve the same end? There is a craze for adopting the so-called western culture without taking time to consider whether some of the

things we adopt are right or wrong or whether they are suited to the genius of our people.

Though divorce is provided for, the obtaining of it is made somewhat difficult, thanks mainly to the great opposition put up by determined proponents of the orthodox view. No petition for a divorce may be filed within three years of a marriage. In exceptional cases a petition may be submitted, earlier, and if the court is satisfied, a decree granted, but it will come into effect only three years from the date of the solemnization of the marriage. Besides this the court has the obligation laid upon it to try reconciliation between the parties before starting the judicial process.

Any one who has dealt with Indian courts of law knows how long it takes to get a decree. There is, moreover, the question of expense, which may be beyond the means of many.

There is a provision in the law which redounds considerably to the credit of the men who framed this piece of legislation. All divorce proceedings must be held *in camera* if either party so desires or the court thinks it fit. Publication of the proceedings is forbidden without the previous permission of the court. Contravention of this provision may bring on the head of the reporter a fine of a thousand rupees.

Divorced persons are allowed to re-marry a year after the decree in the court of first instance.

#### ***Legitimacy of Children and their Custody***

In the case where a marriage has been dissolved either by a decree of nullity or of annulment the children of the marriage, if any, are deemed to be

legitimate provided they were born or conceived before the decree was made, and if such children would have been considered legitimate if the marriage were never annulled.

The custody of the children is left to the court to determine. The court may from time to time modify or change its decree. The wishes of the children themselves are to be taken into consideration, wherever possible.

### **Punishments**

Certain punishments are provided for the contravention of certain sections of the Act. Thus, for instance, for failure to observe the prescription concerning age the guilty party may be sent to jail for fifteen days or fined Rs. 1000/- or may be awarded both fine and jail. Punishment for failing to obtain the requisite permission from a guardian to marriage is a fine of Rs. 1000/-.

### **Savings and Repeals**

Where customary divorce prevails it will continue as before. Marriages, therefore, solemnized either before or after the commencement of this Act may be dissolved in virtue of that customary law.

As the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, applies to the whole of India, all State laws which deal with matters contained in this Act, have been repealed.

The Hindu Marriage Act is the first instalment of the proposed Hindu Code. After Independence the Government, desiring to have one uniform law for Hindus all over the country, brought in the Hindu

Code Bill. But opposition from conservative and orthodox elements to this enlightened measure was so strong that Government had to change its policy. The Code will now come piecemeal. Immediately after the Parliament had passed the marriage law it was asked to consider the law of Succession. It is expected to be enacted in due course.

F. C. Rodrigues

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## *Social Survey*

### **Beggary in India**

There has been a steep fall in the number of beggars and vagrants in India — from 2.5 million in 1911 to 0.5 million in 1951, a fall of 81 per cent for the period.

These figures were collated from previous census reports by the Deputy Registrar General, India.

Here are some State-wise figures. The number of beggars related to the respective State populations in 1952 in Part A States were : Bihar 0.06 per cent, Punjab 0.08 per cent, Madras 0.10 per cent, Bombay 0.11 per cent, Orissa 0.12 per cent and West Bengal 0.17 per cent.

Corresponding figures for part B and C States were as follows : Sikkim 0.10 per cent, Coorg 0.05 Vindhya Pradesh 0.06, Mysore 0.07, Travancore-Cochin 0.09, Pepsu 0.10, Delhi 0.12, Hyderabad 0.25, Madhya Bharat 0.20, Rajasthan 0.27 and Saurashtra 0.38. Chandranagore had the highest percentage of beggars, 1.32.

The largest number of beggars are found in urban areas. Although only 17.3 per cent of the total population of the country lives in cities, as many as 30 per cent of all the beggars are found in urban areas.



### **National Income**

The national income of India was Rs. 10,600 crores in 1953-'54 as compared with Rs. 9,860 crores in 1952-'53, according to the Central Statistical Organisation. The per capita income worked to Rs. 276.4 in 1952-'53 and Rs. 283.9 in 1953-'54.

### **Electricity Output in India**

During March 1955, 686 public utility power stations in India generated 691.1 million kwh (Kilowatt hours) of electricity of which 568.3 million kwh were sold to ultimate consumers.

With the commissioning of new power stations attached to the great national projects the output is steadily rising. But we are still very far from achieving anything like sufficiency. Compared to some of the more advanced countries our output is woefully small.\*

### **Social Diseases among Workers**

Statistics recently published show the high rate of incidence of V. D. among workers in certain localities. Among 2,574 persons treated for V.D. in a Calcutta clinic in 1953 well over half, 1,328, were workers. The clinic spent more time on treating workers than non-workers. The incidence among married workers was much higher than among bachelors. The main cause of this sad state of affairs is the lack of accommodation which prevents workers from bringing their families with them and which makes them live in congested areas. Recreational facilities are almost non-existent. Considering the circumstances in which large numbers of our factory workers are forced to live the incidence of these social diseases is by no means too high.

### **Decimal System**

"It is one of the curious tricks of history" writes the Eastern Economist, "that this country having originated the decimal system should have forgotten to adopt it for its own

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\* In the U.S.A. the electric output in 1951 amounted to about 400,000 million kwh. The TVA alone produced 24,000 million kwh in 1953.

use." The national consciousness seems to have been at last shaken from its slumbers. In the last session of Parliament a Bill has been introduced to apply the decimal system to coinage in India. The Bill will be taken up in the current session and is likely to go through without much difficulty, if one can judge from the lack of enthusiasm in the country for or against the measure. The common man will have a few more headaches trying to forget the twelve pies and the sixteen annas and figuring out the new cents and centimes. For the poor villager who has only 10 fingers and ten toes counting up to hundred is going to be a tough proposition. But the joy of the harrassed cashier will make up for all that. Let us hope the Government will follow up with kilometers and kilograms. Our youngsters in the arithmetic class are keenly interested in the reform although their motives may not be equally patriotic.

### **West Coast Road**

Though the West Coast is one of the richest tracts in natural resources — rice, coconut, peper, spices, coffee, rubber, timber, etc., — the communications are on the whole deplorable, especially between Calicut and Bombay. Building a road or laying a railway line along the coast is an expensive proposition owing, mainly, to the large number of fairly deep and fast flowing rivers which run down from the Western Ghats into the Arabian Sea. There are very few bridges across these rivers which, therefore, make travel costly in money, time and patience. The Government has at last decided to build an all-weather highway from Bombay to Cape Comorin and work is progressing satisfactorily. Recently the Railway Minister laid the foundation stones for two bridges in South Kanara. He has also announced that a land and engineering survey is being made to study the possibilities of building a railway along the coast to connect Mangalore with Bombay.

### **Labour Welfare Board, Bombay**

In 1953-'54 there were 54 labour welfare centres at work in the Bombay State. About 2,100 persons, comprising 50 per cent men, mostly between 15 and 30 years of age, 10 per cent adult women and the rest children below the age of 15 attended the centres. The activities of the centres were

organised mainly from a recreational angle. However, in the case of women, sewing machines seem to have been the main attraction. After they picked up the use of the machines, the women brought their own work to the centres and thus saved tailoring charges. They also obtained job work from their neighbours and thereby earned additional income. The centres have introduced handicraft training in order to assist low income groups. In Bombay a handicraft teacher was appointed who spent three to four weeks at each centre teaching various simple handicrafts such as toy making, fancy embroidery, knitting, making ready-made articles of clothing for women and children, etc. The articles made at the centres were sold at exhibitions and the proceeds used for the work of the centres.

For adults, both men and women, various forms of recreation were organised. Dramas, athletics, folk-dancing and sports were very popular.

Medical facilities were made available by doctors who donated their services free. Medicines were supplied free or at nominal cost to deserving cases. Anti-drink propaganda was one of the important features at all centres.

### **Railwaymen's Federation**

A split in the Railwaymen's Federation has been averted, at least for the time being, but yet all is not well within. There are groups at variance with each other and there is a lot of dissatisfaction all around. Friends of the railwaymen are working hard to bring about a rapprochement among the warring leaders and to make the union one and powerful. We hope that their efforts will be crowned with success.

Recently a convention was called by Mr. Guruswamy, the General Secretary of the National Federation of Indian Railwaymen at Madras to denounce the "authoritarian, arbitrary and undemocratic" behaviour of the President of the Federation, Mr. Vasavada, in conducting very important business without consulting anyone.

The Madras Convention was attended by a majority of non-INTUC and former AIRF group. A section of the INTUC group from the Western Railway also joined up with the old AIRF group. The Madras Convention censured and deposed

Mr. Vasavada and elected in his place, unanimously, Mr. V. V. Giri, a former Labour Minister in the Central Cabinet, as President. But Mr. Giri who is the staunchest friend of railwaymen declined the offer.

Now it was the turn of the Vasavada group. It condemned the Convention as illegal, as it was called solely by the General Secretary who had no power to do so. Since then people who have the welfare of railwaymen at heart have been working hard to heal the split and bring all parties and factions together. But the outcome is not at all hopeful. There are too many factions and group rivalries. To make matters worse the leaders do not seem to see the dangers threatening the organisation.

### ***Land for Schools and Doctors***

The Andhra Government is reported to have accepted some of the recommendations made by the Kuppaswamy Committee on elementary education. One of the recommendations is to allot five acres of land to every training school to set up farms, and one acre of land for every elementary school for its maintenance.

In Madras to attract the medical profession to the villages the Government has a proposal to allot to every doctor working in a village two acres of good cultivable land. Will the doctors be called upon to spend their year of internship in an agricultural college?

### ***Fertilizer Plant***

Following the wise policy of availing itself of the best talent available for the betterment of the country, the Government of India has just signed a contract with an Italian firm of international fame to set up a factory for the production of azote fertilizers in the Sindri area. The application of these fertilizers, it is claimed, has shown remarkable results particularly in grains, which have yielded 20 per cent more.

### ***Agricultural Families***

Some very interesting and revealing statistics on the income and expenditure of agricultural families have been collected by an all-India agricultural labour inquiry conducted by the Government of India in 1950-'51.

The average annual income of an agricultural labour family in India is about Rs. 447, of which 64.2 per cent is derived from agricultural wages, 11.9 from non-agricultural labour, 13.4 per cent from cultivation of land and 10.5 per cent from all other sources.

The highest average income of Rs. 651 is in north-west India and the lowest is Rs. 382 in South India. Region-wise it is Rs. 551 in North India, Rs. 506 in East India and Rs. 391 in West India and Rs. 417 in Central India.

The total wage bill of agricultural families in India is estimated at Rs. 500 crores as against a total national income of Rs. 4,800 crores from agricultural other than plantation.

The inquiry report reveals that the per capita income of an agricultural labourer is as low as Rs. 104, in comparison with the per capita national income which is Rs. 264.

Majority of the families in Madras, Travancore-Cochin, Bombay, Madhya Pradesh, Madhya Bharat and Orissa fall in the income range of Rs. 100 to Rs. 400. In U.P., Bihar, West Bengal, Assam, Saurashtra, Rajasthan and the Punjab, the income range of families is Rs. 300 to 700. In Pepsu 40 per cent of the families are in the income group of Rs. 901 and above.

Out of the total expenditure of Rs. 468, food alone accounts for 85 per cent. Most agricultural families have deficit budgets, the average per family being Rs. 14. The expenditure on clothing and footwear is Rs. 29 or 6.3 per cent. In North and North West India these items cost more. On tobacco, beetle, beetle-nuts, bidis, cigarettes, washing-soap and medicine on an average Rs. 32, or 6.5 per cent, are spent. In the South more is spent on these items than in the North.

The average daily wage of an adult male casual worker is annas 17.5 for the country as a whole. For women it is about 13.5 annas. But most men get less than annas ten and women 5.6 annas. Compared with industrial workers agricultural labour gets less than one third, the figures for adult males being annas 54 and 17.

45 per cent of the agricultural families are indebted, the average debt per family being Rs. 105. The total debt of the agricultural labourers in India is estimated at Rs. 80 crores. (Times of India)

### **Corruption on Railways**

The Railway Corruption Enquiry Committee, set up on October 3, 1953 under the chairmanship of Mr. H.N. Kunzru, who was later succeeded by Acharya J. B. Kripalani, has completed its task and submitted its report to the Government. The Committee issued six questionnaires to different interests, including a general questionnaire to which it received 500 replies. In all it undertook five tours, visited 47 places, examined 1150 witnesses and held 178 sittings. Its report covers 75,000 words, divided into fourteen chapters and appendices. It has made over 150 recommendations.

The report begins by telling us that corruption on railways is nothing new : it was there even in the old company days. Then it was confined only to the underpaid staff ; now it has spread even to higher-ups. As for the causes the Committee is of the opinion that the main ones are, (1) inefficiency and dishonesty in the police force which does little to detect and apprehend corruption ; (2) the unwieldy size of the new railway zones which makes it impossible for top-officials to have personal contact with all sections and parts of the zone ; (3) lack of a general civic sense and business-morality. Even Chambers of Commerce and Trade Unions have been guilty of corrupt practices in their dealings with the railways. (4) Shortage of gazetted officers in charge of supervisory work. With the increase in the volume of work more and more men are diverted to paper work with the result there are few men on the line. (5) General corruption all around which has lowered moral standards considerably.

Among the many recommendations made by the Committee the following are some of the chief ones :

- (1) Setting up of more railway zones of smaller dimensions ;
- (2) Paying of greater attention to character in making selection for key posts ;
- (3) Observing more rigidly the rule regarding transfers of higher officials ;
- (4) The rewarding of efficient officers by promotion, bonuses and other emoluments ;

(5) Narrowing down the disparity between the emoluments of the higher and lower categories of railway workers ;

(6) Meting out of quick and exemplary punishment for corrupt practices to all, irrespective of position. Rewarding of officers who make successful efforts to root out corruption ; and finally

(7) Seeing to it that railway laws are strictly observed both by the railway staff and the travelling public.

There are many other recommendations. Unless the citizens, whether they be railway employees or members of the public, improve their civic sense there is little hope of improvement in spite of all the committees and their multitudinous recommendations. Civic sense implies a respect for Natural Law. Unless we build on strong and sound ethical principles nothing will avail. Merely telling people not to be corrupt is no remedy, nor is the setting up of new anti-corruption squads. Let us concentrate on educating the public conscience and matters will improve.

### Horror Comics

The Central Government has at last come to the rescue of young minds by banning the so-called horror comics which in reality are nothing but horrible tragedies. Why these sadistic orgies, these suggestive doings of half-witted civilised barbarians and these ruinous tales are called comics is a veritable mystery. As if the cinemas with their lightly coated sex and crime were not doing enough harm to hearts and minds of our youth we have been importing vast quantities of these horror comics from foreign lands wasting, in the bargain, much of our precious foreign savings.

When will our popular Government take the next step and ban those filthy magazines full of grossly immodest sex pictures which are brazenly exhibited on street pavements, railway book-stalls and book-shops. It is absurd for us to shed crocodile tears at the growing indiscipline among our students and at the same time fail to check the evil which is slowly but surely eating away at the vitals of our youth. This yellow literature is, let us be clear about it, deadly poison ; there is no gainsaying that. It may be slow but it will inexorably produce its effects.

F. C. R.

## Book Reviews

**THE RIGHT VIEW OF MRA**, by the Rt Rev. Mgr. Leon-Joseph Suenens, pp. x + 97, Burns and Oats, London, 1954. Price 6 sh.

This book is mainly meant to guide the Catholic believer in his reactions to the Moral Re-Armament movement which has attracted growing attention especially since the end of the war. The movement is still spreading and already has disciples in every country of the free world. Quite recently a MRA mission was in India for a few days and roused keen interest wherever it went.

The Moral Re-Armament movement,\* which is a few decades old was founded by Frank Buchman, an American Protestant minister of Swiss origin. While in England he once attended a religious service in a small church. During the sermon preached by a woman he had a sudden inner experience, a sort of revelation, in which he saw that the salvation of the world was to be sought not in wars and strifes but in a moral reformation. From then on he was a new man, a man with a message. After some time he went and settled down in Oxford, England, and there began spreading his Message. He and his followers were first called "First Century Christians" but this name gave place to the more popular one "The Oxford Group". Since 1933 the movement is known by its present name.

The aim of the MRA is to save civilization which is in peril. The official handbook — the only one which bears the name of the founder — has the significant title, *Remaking the World*. The fundamental doctrine of the MRA is that everyone in some way is responsible for his brother's salvation. We are here on earth not only to know, love and serve God, but to make Him known, loved and served. This is achieved by the faithful practice of the Four Absolutes: absolute honesty, absolute purity, absolute unselfishness and absolute love. Thus the Ten Commandments are reduced to four:

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\* *Social Action*, Sept. 1952 pg. 197.



The distinction between mortal sin and venial sin is done away with. Purity is rigidly imposed and is of the puritanical type. To practise these Four Absolutes a man must completely surrender himself to the Holy Spirit who is the sole ruler and guide of the world. They must listen to his voice and do his bidding. In doubt they are to consult their companions.

MRA makes no distinction between the various religions and sects; all are welcome to work for its ideals. It says that it is not a religious movement. In its eyes all religions are equally good, or rather it prescinds from taking into consideration the fact that there are various religions and religious groups in the world.

Now the question for a catholic is: is this movement, born outside the Church, such that it can be brought into harmony with the teaching and practice of the Church or is it a new type of religious movement and therefore alien to his profession and duty? Mgr. Suenens answers this question brilliantly. In the first few pages of the book he studies in detail the teaching and practice of the MRA giving quotations from official writings and speeches. He analyzes its credentials in order to show whether it is a purely socio-ethical revivalist movement or a truly religious affair. In the second half of the book the author shows through sound logic and solid argument that MRA is a truly religious movement and therefore forbidden to a Catholic. In fact it has been forbidden by Bishops in most countries where it is better known.

The main contention of the author against the movement is that it is religious in its nature and practice. Then it is fraught with the danger of spreading indifferentism. The very fact that it dumps all religions in the same basket is enough to make any one pause. Besides in its inspiration it is Protestant — Buchman and most of his top aides are Protestant Ministers — and, therefore, full of that liberalism, the hallmark of non-catholic sects. Everything is left to the Holy Spirit and much stress is laid on inner guidance. For a student of Church History it is clear that the present movement is just a twentieth century edition of a work that has appeared century after century from the beginning of the Church.

A certain number of catholics, and some of them of great name and fame, have joined the movement and are working for it misled by its sociological appeal. A careful reader of Mgr. Suenens illuminating study will have no hesitation in deciding that the Moral Re-Armament movement is not meant for a catholic, however noble its ideals and however laudable the means used. The author has many good things to say about the MRA workers, especially about their zeal, their high purpose and utter devotedness to the cause. But that does not prevent him from passing judgement on the movement considered from a religious point of view.

We earnestly hope that this timely and extremely well written book will be widely read by Catholics who have in some way or other come in contact with the Moral Re-Armament movement.

F. C. R.

**KARMAYOGI.** Karmayogi is the Students' magazine of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences. It contains a variety of articles dealing with various aspects of social work in India. It is certainly a credit to the activity and zeal of the student-editor and his colleagues to have published so informative an issue. Obviously in India, the content of social work, the methods to be used and the training to be given professional social workers are issues bristling with controversy. Must we blindly imitate Western methods or adapt them to the Indian background? No facile solution offers itself to hand. It is only time and experience that will finally solve the problem. And while this issue of Karmayogi deals partially with some of these questions it is a good effort on the part of the faculty of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences to make their students think along these lines. We hope that issues of this kind will be a regular feature of the alumni activity of the Tata Institute and that the magazines will find their way into the hands of youthful Social Service Leaguers in many of our colleges.

A. F.

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2. To provide theoretical and practical training for social workers.
3. To serve as a centre of information about social works.

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